

Sir Sidney Smith, not thinking either that a general would abandon his army, or that vessels would sail for Europe against the adverse winds of that season, had made for Cyprus to renew his supply of water. In this interval the two French frigates gained the open sea, their captains entertaining the vague hope of reaching Toulon direct, by some reversal of nature's laws. But the prevalent breezes continued, and compelled them to coast along the African shore. It was three weeks before they even sighted the headlands of Tunis. At last a favoring wind began to blow. With lights extinguished, they passed at night the strait which separates Africa from Sicily, escaping the observation of the English cruisers sent from Nelson's fleet to patrol those waters. Skirting Sardinia, the flotilla reached Corsica early in October. Though, as Bonaparte declared, he was "deeply moved by the sight of his native town/" no remnant of his early enthusiasm could sweeten for him the enforced delay of several days in the harbor of Ajaccio. He had left far behind the emotions of that primitive society, and, evidently fretting to be gone, was rather impatient at the abounding caresses of all the friends who thronged the town when he was ashore and crowded the decks when he was afloat. Some deeds have been recorded to his credit: all the money he had by him, about forty thousand francs, he distributed to the garrison, which had not been paid for over a year and a half; his features, it is also said, relaxed with evident joy as he tenderly returned the greeting of the old woman who had been his earliest attendant. It was his last visit to the island of his birth, but not the last time the accents of its dialect fell on his ears, for it was a Corsican who troubled his dying hours at St. Helena.

What moved him really and deeply was the news of